(b) Bill provides that the Secretary of Commerce shall establish a commission to be known as the Commission on America Jobs. The Commission shall collect data on outsourcing by US companies and its subsidiaries, identify number of jobs outsourced, location to which the jobs were outsourced and dates that the jobs were outsourced. Commission is also required to conduct studies to find out the reasons for outsourcing and propose possible measures to prevent outsourcing by companies.

(c) The provisions of Bill would not have any direct effect on Indian IT professionals who wish to go to USA.

MoU between India and Italy

1733 DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:
SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Italy have signed a set of 8 MoUs for co-operation in various areas of science and technology including early warning of disasters and land mapping for agriculture;

(b) if so, whether MoU envisages among other things, development of web-enabled technologies for small and medium scale enterprises, establishment of research hubs on bio-informatics neuro informatics and grid technologies and setting up of a joint laboratory on micro-electronic-mechanical systems; and

(c) if so, by what time these agreements are likely to be implemented and to what extent it would be beneficial for India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) An MoU between the Ministry of Science and Technology of India and Ministry of Education, Universities and Research of Italy and six technical MoUs between the centres of excellence on both sides were signed during the visit of Italian President in February 2005.

(b) These MoUs envisage research fellowships to Indian scientists in advance technology sectors such as Nanoscience, bio-informatics, neuro-informatics, Web and multimedia technologies, Grid technologies, Electronics, Aerospace engineering and Research on natural catastrophes.

(c) The MoUs are likely to be implemented soon and are expected to result in the creation of capacity building in the field of Science and Technology.

Indo-Afghan relations

1734. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether he visited Afghanistan in the month of February and had discussions with Afghanistan President and also other leaders during his visit;

(b) if so, whether India has agreed to provide more aid to Afghanistan during 2005-06;

(c) if so, the agreements reached between the two countries;

(d) by what time these agreements are likely to be implemented; and

(e) whether Afghans are looking in a capacity building and hoping to use India as a training ground for their teachers, doctors and administrators?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) External Affairs Minister visited Kabul on 15 February 2005. He met President Karzai, Baba-e-Millat and former King Zahir Shah, and Foreign Minister Dr. Abdullah. During the visit, he inaugurated the new surgical block of Indira Gandhi Institute of Child Health (IGICH), which has been reconstructed with Indian assistance and handed over 49 vehicles to the Afghan National Army. A package of support of IGICH was also announced, including training of doctors and paramedics in India and setting up of a diagnostic centre at IGICH.

(b) India has committed US $ 500 million over the period 2002—2008 for the reconstruction of Afghanistan.

(c) No agreement was signed during the visit of External Affairs Minister to Kabul.

(d) Does not arise.